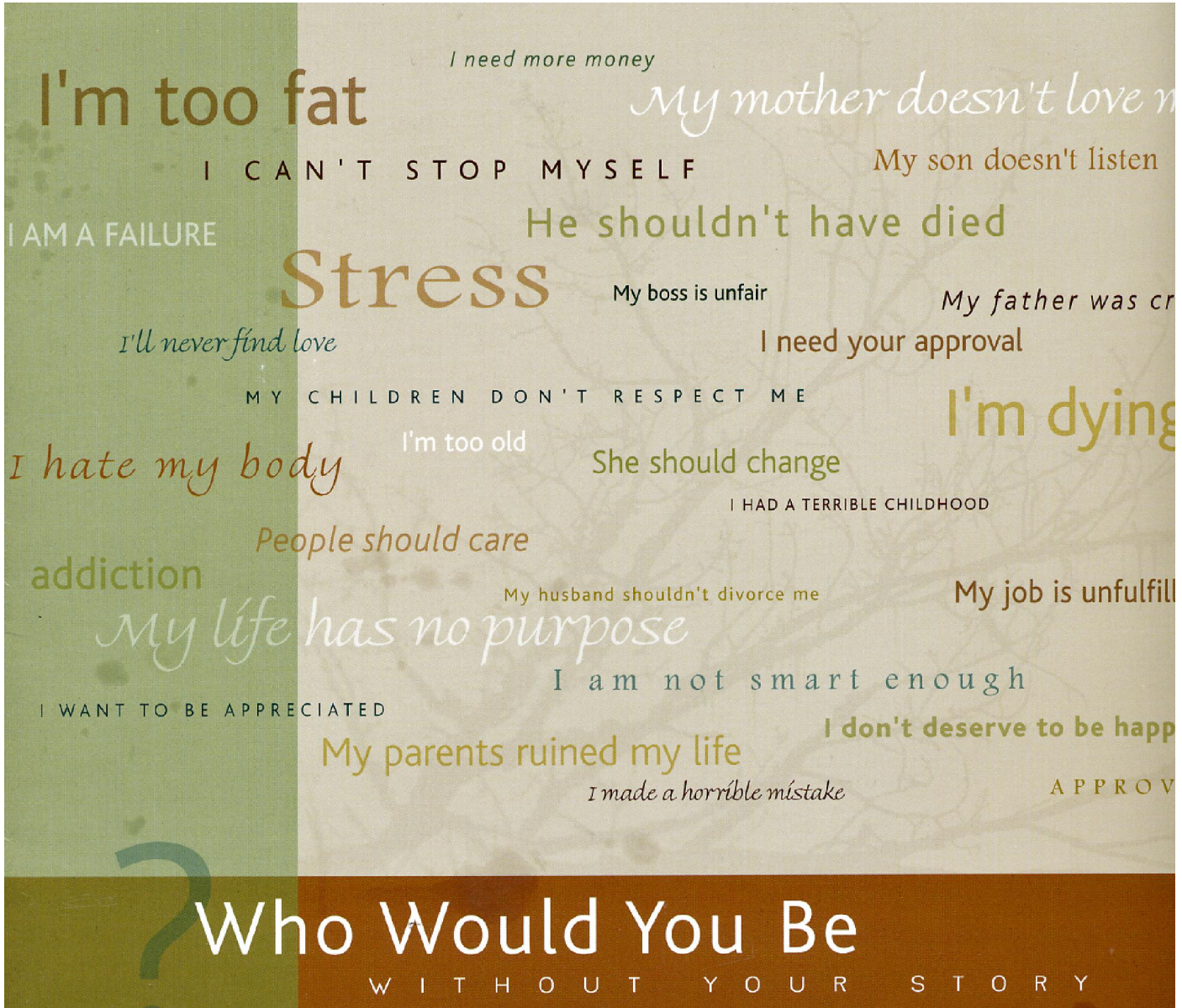


Your Storied Life

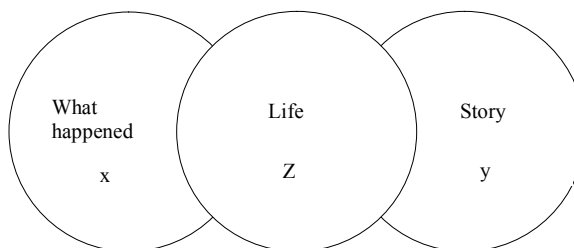


Who would you be without that thought?

What stories are you telling yourself right now?

What stories have you given up or changed, creating a more powerful you?

The Basic Gist



What happened = observable like NVC

Everyone would agree about this. Friend or foe, cultures or across time, there is agreement. That's what happened; there is no drama here. People create the drama on top of what happened. Rackets (see later) are consistent drama. If someone else out of context says the same thing, often no or less effect. Not words themselves – no effect.

Story = what you make of what happened

$Z = x + y$ ((x) is what happened, and (y) is the story we make of (x)). Life (Z) is between x and y. What happened is what the camera sees. The story is what you put upon it.

When you are in your story, you are not present, but rather in the past. Judgment, right, wrong are often in the past. The drama of the story allows you to avoid responsibility. It is outside of yourself, and there is no power in that.

People fight over their stories about one another. **All wars and conflicts** are based on stories.

Fear is always followed by a story.

Telling people about the stories they are telling is often useless – it's a lecture. Use Success Counselor instead.

How to avoid responsibility and progress: Your promise, *plus a really good reason*, equals "I'm off the hook." Powerless, transformation rarely occurs.

Self-fulfilling prophesy.

"Life" = often a vicious circle, where you are "right" / makes victims and people wrong.

The physical world doesn't have drama. You create the drama = rackets.

This is how you are being as a result of the story. Life is where you are – between what happened and your story. Problems and being a victim are fascinating & satisfying. That's your life though – wake up and die with problems.

Drama is always in the now, not the past or future. AGAIN: drama is *always* in the now, not the past or future.

At any given moment, you breathe life into life, or you kill it off (cynicism/telling/sapping story)

More stories people tell themselves . . .

- "I can't learn _____" (Names, craft, archery, horses, javelins, . . .)
- "I'm different when _____" (I'm with these people, I'm doing x, I'm in this place, . . .)
- "I'd be happier if _____" (I had more money, I looked like, I did this, . . .)
- "I'd love you if _____" (You did this, you didn't do that, . . .)
- "They(I) should have _____" (Done x, not done y, been this way, not been that way, . . .)
- "You are _____" (Boring, mean, untrustworthy, wrong, bad, . . .)
- "That's just the way I am _____" (Shy, unhappy, mean, unpopular, critical, . . .)
- "Life is _____" (Sucky, hard, unfair, harsh, crappy, depressing, . . .)

Caveats

- Circularity: "My being false to you isn't wrong or bad; that's just your story. What? Your being false is bad; that's my story."
- Absurdity: "Shooting an arrow while people are down range isn't wrong; that's just your story about it."
- Extremity: "A lot of people died in the Holocaust. Whether it is bad or good is the story." True, yet difficult for many to grasp.
- Grieving: Death of family, friend, pet. Broken relationship. Unjust result. Key is to experience w/o internal or external foe.

- Immediate gratification: Expecting perfection or progress along some timeline sets you up to fail. Strive in the present.
- Goals: Strive for a way of being, rather than a specific goal. You're unlikely to win the gold medal; you can, however, be more graceful or strong. You can excel.

Getting past foe feelings

- ☉ See it as a story
- ☉ Needs under what happened – imagine them as a fresh baby, and what went on after that to lead them to where they are
- ☉ Examine attachments (see Spectrum of Consciousness)
- ☉ See the complexity around them as a person / compassion
- ☉ Short term pain versus long-term gain. Put iodine on wound, hurts, but do it anyway, because in long run, helps heal.
- ☉ Without right and wrong, there is still regret, sadness, wishing things to be different; there can be restitution; no guarantee.

A few more examples of stories

What happened	Story	Life
It's raining	I hate it when it rains, ugh.	Depressed, sad, unhappy
Cut off in traffic	Stupid driver, asshole!	Pissed off
Breasts are a given size	They are too big (Brazil) / They are too small (US)	I am not loveable / I am not loveable
Spit in face	Jerk! / What brought this poor soul to doing this?	Pissed off / Compassion and empathy
A dog	A loveable pet / Something to eat	Companionship / Nourishment
Climbed tree as child, fell, got hurt	Climbing trees is dangerous	Don't climb trees. Don't let my children ever climb trees

Micro stories that inflate the red balloon

Huh, red balloon? Imagine everyone has a large, red, uninflated, party balloon attached to their lower lip. It's comfy enough; it's been there since birth. ☺ To put air in your balloon, you only need to think, speak, or feel aggravated / frustrated. That energy expended goes into the red balloon. With the balloon growing in size, it progressively obscures your view of the world . . . you see more red. (Slowing letting air out of the balloon, stretching the balloon's mouth, often sounds like whining. ☺) The beauty that is present in the world is also obscured . . . the flora and fauna, the acts of kindness and good nature, the good that is present in people, even when it is hidden at first glance.

Bourgeois suffering. Favorite restaurant is closed. You wanted the aisle on the airplane, and you get a middle seat. Such lightweight suffering, and we make such a big deal about it. Pet Peeves // Annoyances.

Complaining – we are masters of aggravating our troubles. We whine. We stir it up. We bleed. We enjoy it on a short-term basis. Grow which muscle? Pain and suffering. Change that life-long habit of aggravating our troubles. Change the story, change your life.

Stories about your frustrations, anger, sadness, shame, indifference, despair, anxiety, etc. change over the course of your life. The “what” changes. The tragedy is that you'll keep telling yourself those stories, although the actors and situations change, and defend them with vitality of a god. And then you die.

Long ago, a fellow was walking through the world with bare feet, and he got cut by sharp rocks, burned by hot sand, and pricked by sticks and thorns. He thought to himself, “The world is too hot and sharp! Aha! I'll cover the entire world with leather. Then, wherever I walk, I'll be okay!” He eventually realized that wasn't possible to create all this leather with all the animals he could ever find. Then, instead, he decided to wrap leather around his two feet, and he was able to walk anywhere. Get it?

Crossing domains

Videos: Blame Game / Help Me I Can't Help Myself / What Would Jesus Buy? / The Merchants of Cool / Still Killing us softly / and others
 Enemy images in staff manual
 Elephant Story in staff manual
 Clinics – how well you do, good and bad. Social comparison theory.
 What is Success Counseling . . . telling yourself a different story about how to get what you want.

Reflections on Your Storied Life

Everyone has stories.

It is impossible not to.

Stories are not inherently good or bad. They're simply stories.

People forget to remember/consider that another possibility exists.

Be open to the idea that there is not THE story, but a story.

The key: Choose stories that serve life, yours and others

Often, the hardest question

What am I physically capable of?

Are you going to flap your arms real fast and fly? No. Especially without our ingenious creations, we are limited.

We rarely struggle at the positive end of the spectrum of possibility, but rather at the depressive, limiting side. We're faced with hardship, and we believe, or really want to believe, that is our bottom point. When that is not the absolute truth, we run a "Racket" (see chapter) on ourselves.

Who is Oscar Pistorius? He lost both legs, and that's a problem for being a fast runner. He has a really good reason why he is not a runner, let alone a fast runner. That's his truth. But it wasn't. He didn't believe that. That was not static and enduring for him. So, with artificial limbs, he became the fastest person on earth.

Even with base states of being, we have stories around our experience.

What's HappenING	Story		
Sleepy	Sad	Nonplussed	Frustrated
Physically tired	Challenged	Inspired	Amused
Dehydrated	Disappointed	Aggravated	Curious

The Key: **Difference** is in **choosing** how you feel about your state in the now
And, what you decide is your story about how you are in a static, enduring capacity

Check yourself . . . what are you capable of?

How does it feel?

I'm not telling you what your limitations are. You are.

Some are absolutely true. And some are stories.

What limitations are you willing to argue for? One more time, what limitations are you willing to argue for?

Drama

Drama exists in our heads

Drama is not what happened

Drama is the story

Drama is not in our words

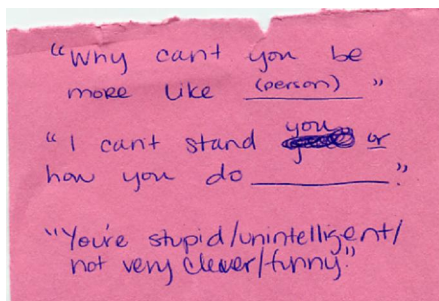
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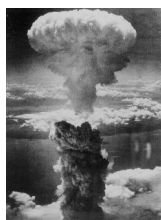
Nursery Rhyme:

Sticks and stones may break my bones

But words will never hurt me.



Drama is always in the now
Drama is always your doing



terrible tragedy

an amazing victory and glorious day

destruction / loss life

our enemies are being punished by Allah





genocide tragedy

cleansing of the human race, a great service

What about support?

Yes. There are many factors and history that may have taught us unproductive, or negative, stories. Disadvantaged children living in abject poverty and with physically and/or emotionally absent parents, for example. Or, privileged children who also lack emotional intelligence.

? = what is that individual human being's ceiling, their capacity? What is their *absolute* bottom line?

? = are you willing to draw that line for them?

If not, then decide if you are willing to scaffold them so that they can reach as high as they can.

Closing thoughts

Take a paradise, a gifted life, and turn it into a hell. It's hot. The kids are brats. I don't like that staff person. I hate doing that activity. The dust is annoying. Parent letters aren't fun. Wood cookies are hard. "Bad" feedback from my campers got me down. How can I do this? How can they do this? the beauty of the forest, the water, the community, the food, the kids, the staff, the training, the support, the activities, the opportunity. Whether your moments here are heaven or hell is entirely up to you. That's an exciting possibility!!

Your Storied Life is incredibly empowering . . . deciding what is possible, and breaking of lenses that colored what you believed was possible and real.

I have plenty of disempowering stories . . .

So do all of you.

We need to support one another when we see a story that is not life enriching.

I invite you . . . implore you . . . beseech you . . . to challenge the stories you tell yourself

